



# Welaka Gazette

*July 2022*

## From The Mayor's Desk

As I am writing to you, we are closing out the month of June, and I hope everyone is enjoying their summer here in Welaka. We are experiencing scorching days, so please be careful and keep hydrated. As you read this newsletter, we have already started our massive road project in the Town. They are moving through the Town, milling the streets, and preparing the road base for the new lime rock and millings. We are very excited about this project as it will improve our streets. This project will take about a month to complete, so I ask you to please be patient with us as we work throughout the Town. I can assure you that it will all be worth it. I want to share a quick story about one of our staff members that I believe deserves acknowledgement. Mr. John Stuart, our Public Works Supervisor, is overseeing our road project. During the planning phase of this project, it was determined that we would need a dozen barricades and other signs to direct traffic during the project. We initially planned to reach out to a barricade company to rent the barriers. Mr. Stuart took it upon himself to go to Putnam County Public Works and inquire about borrowing from them. They were nice enough to loan them to us for no charge, saving us thousands of dollars. I would like to publicly thank John for taking it upon himself to save the Town's money. I would also like to thank our Utility Department and our Utility Supervisor Tyler Buford for all their hard work in preparing for and assisting with this project. It is through a team effort that we will get this accomplished.

On a Public Safety front, we are very excited about our new law enforcement officer starting on July 5th. Officer Bryant will be a full-time police officer in the Town of Welaka. His previous experience includes the City of St. Augustine Beach Police Department. His primary focus will be nights and weekends in the Town. We will also be looking to budget two additional part-time officers in the coming budget cycle starting in October. While other cities across America seek to defund and dismantle their Police departments, the Town of Welaka is working to better fund our department to ensure our officers have what they need to protect our residents. I want to make it abundantly clear that here in Welaka, we support and appreciate our law enforcement and the dangerous work they do daily to protect our community.

On a Water Utility front, the Welaka Town Council, at our last meeting, approved continuing service contracts with several engineering firms. One of which will be designing our new Wastewater Treatment Plant. We are also working with another engineering firm to complete an application for a six hundred thousand dollar grant for a new auto-read water meter system for the Town. This auto-read system will save us time as we read your water meters, but more importantly, it will save you money by notifying us of a leak before it results in you getting a huge water bill. This will not only

save you money but will also ensure we are conserving water. With this same grant, we are also applying to do a complete rehab of one of our critical lift stations in Town, which is lift station 6, over on 4th Avenue. As you ride through Town, you will notice those big green enclosures throughout the Town. These lift stations move wastewater through the Town to our wastewater treatment plant. All six stations were manufactured in the nineteen seventies, and we have reached a point where we are having difficulty getting parts for them. This upgrade will go a long way in improving our infrastructure for the future.

To give you an additional update on our roads, we will be working with one of our engineering firms in the coming days to prepare the engineering for our streets so we can begin to seek grants and legislative appropriations to improve our roads. As many of you are aware, I spent a week in Tallahassee in February, meeting with sixteen of our lawmakers from across the state, and discussing the needs of Welaka. I promised you when I took office that Welaka would have a seat at the table in Tallahassee when it comes to seeking funds to improve our Town. Through the help of our State Representative Bobby Payne, Welaka has that seat. In the coming months, I intend on applying for several million dollars in grants and requesting direct funding of projects through legislative appropriations supported by our Florida House and Senate and our Governor. I will keep you up to date as we move through this process.

On a Town events front, we are very excited about our Food Truck Friday event on August 5th. This will be our last Food Truck Friday for the year, and we will close it out in style. That night we will be hosting DJ Doctor Doom from IHeartRadio, playing your favorite music all evening. We will also have a foam party in the park, something you must see to believe. Finally, at 9:00 PM that evening, we will be hosting Welaka's first-ever Town-Sponsored fireworks display. We have a professional fireworks company that will be putting on a massive display on the St. Johns River. We will be closing out our Food Truck Friday at 8:00 PM that evening to allow you to make your way to the river. I am proud that this fireworks display was paid for entirely by sponsorship, and we appreciate their support.

As I write this, I am looking back over all that we have accomplished in the past year in Welaka. Everything from the improvement of our streets to our new sewer plant to all the significant events we are having in the Town to all the advances in our Public Works and Utility Departments; looking back over this past year that I have been your Mayor, we have accomplished much in the Town of Welaka and I by no means could have gotten us where we are alone. It has only been through a combined effort of our Town Council and our residents that we have moved Welaka forward with so much so quickly. I want to thank you, the residents of Welaka, for caring so much for our Town and working alongside us to improve it. As I close out this month's newsletter, I think of President Franklin Roosevelt's quote, "There are many ways of going forward, but only one way of standing still." Thank you for working with us not to allow Welaka to stand still but to instead move forward in a way that improves the lives of all the residents of Welaka. I hope everyone has a great summer, and I look forward to talking to you next month.

*Very Best Regards,*

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jamie D. Watts" in a cursive script. Below the name, the word "MAYOR" is printed in a small, sans-serif font.

# From The Council President

July brings us to the middle of the year, moving into the latter half. Since it is July, I thought that I might reference one of our own American Holidays, Independence Day. When I was in school, we were required to memorize the preamble to the Declaration of Independence.

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. To secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed."

There's more to the preamble (and we were required to memorize the entire preamble!), and much more to the Declaration of Independence. I would certainly encourage you to read it, but this portion has so much to be considered in and of itself.

So while we enjoy a nice weekend and celebrate with family and friends, let us turn our thoughts to the beginnings of our Nation, the good and bad, and let us celebrate our unalienable rights endowed by our Creator of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

In Your Service,  
Jessican Finch, Welaka Town Council President



## Need A Meeting With Your Mayor?

To schedule a meeting with your Mayor, please go to [www.MayorWatts.com](http://www.MayorWatts.com) and select the date and time that works for you.



## *Do You Have News for the Town of Welaka?* **PUBLISH IT IN THE WELAKA GAZETTE!**

For more information, please contact the **Welaka Town Clerk, Meghan Allmon**, at [TownClerk@welaka-fl.gov](mailto:TownClerk@welaka-fl.gov)

## June's Recognitions and Proclamations



- **Proclamation 2022-11** - 81st Birthday Proclamation for Robert Harrell

If you would like to recognize a Town of Welaka resident for dedicated community service to our Town, a local student with exceptional grades, or to nominate a Town resident who is celebrating a landmarked birthday such as turning 100 years old, please contact our **Welaka Town Clerk, Meghan Allmon**, at [TownClerk@welaka-fl.gov](mailto:TownClerk@welaka-fl.gov). We will be happy to recognize them at our next Council Meeting by public recognition.



## **Eyeglass Recycling – How You Can Help**

South Putnam Lion Club would like to remind you that you can drop your unused glasses by Welaka Town Hall in the drop-box in the main hallway. Donate glasses and change someone's life. Imagine if you could help a child read, an adult to succeed in their job, or a senior citizen maintaining their independence. Help to provide our community with more opportunities to grow and thrive.



## **Need To Report An Issue or Make A Town Code Violation Complaint?**

Need to report a street or parks issue or make a Codes Enforcement Complaint? Report online at [www.TellTownHall.com](http://www.TellTownHall.com)



## **Helping Hands of Welaka Toy Drive**

Helping Hands of Welaka is collecting toys to give out to the children who attend the Welaka Christmas Parade & Festival in December of this year. If you would like to donate, please contact **Harriet Vanslyke** at **(631) 764 - 2308**



## **Sponsor an Event**

The Events Committee is seeking sponsors as they plan new events for the future. Some of the events include having a fireworks show at one of our events. Like all things, these things cost money. While the town sponsors these events, we do not have it in the budget to do everything we want to do. If you know anyone who would like to sponsor any of our events, please reach out to our Events Committee at [events@welaka-fl.gov](mailto:events@welaka-fl.gov)



# COMMUNITY CLEANUP

Saturday, July 9th, 2022

Join  
**Friends of Welaka**  
at the Town Hall Pavilion

COFFEE AND PASTRIES AT 7 AM ~ PICKUP BEGINS AT 8 AM

CLOSE TOED SHOES AND GLOVES RECOMMENDED



Made with PosterMyWall.com



# HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS TIPS

GEICO encourages you take these steps to prepare yourself, your loved ones, and your car from dangerous weather.

### Review your emergency plan

Review your plan with everyone in your household and make sure everyone knows about the safest location in the home.

### Check your supplies

Be sure to you have necessities such as water, blankets, first aid kits, flashlights, batteries, radios and any pet care items.

### Set up an out-of-town contact

It's important to have an out-of-state friend or family member as a contact, so they can check on your whereabouts.

### Secure important documents

Make sure documents such as insurance cards, IDs and other pertinent information are placed in a secured water-proof container.

### Figure out your evacuation route

Make sure you know your evacuation route before the storm hits and keep a full tank of gas.

### Be aware of your vehicle's surroundings

Make sure your vehicle is safe. If possible, move your vehicle away from trees or other objects that may damage it in a storm.

### Follow official instructions

Follow all instructions from your local authorities regarding evacuation or other safety procedures. Check radio, television or other media for emergency information.

GEICO

St. Johns River  
Water Management District

# Watering restrictions

## residential irrigation

**During daylight saving time**  
Irrigation is allowed two days a week from the second Sunday in March until the first Sunday in November. Designated days are:

- Wednesday and Saturday at homes with addresses that end in an odd number or have no address
- Thursday and Sunday at homes with addresses that end in an even number

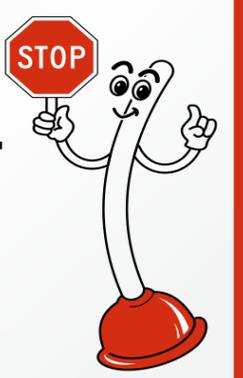
**During Eastern Standard Time**  
Irrigation is allowed one day a week from the first Sunday in November until the second Sunday in March. Designated days are:

- Saturday at homes with addresses that end in an odd number or have no address
- Sunday at homes with addresses that end in an even number



# DO NOT FLUSH WET WIPES DOWN THE TOILET

# DON'T BELIEVE THE HYPE... FLUSHABLE WIPES CLOG OUR SYSTEM.



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# TOWN OF WELAKA CONTACT LIST

## Welaka Police Department

### **Michael Porath - Police Chief**

Direct Line: (386) 524-4015

Town Hall Extension: 107

**mporath@welaka-fl.gov**

## Mayor's Office

### **Mayor Jamie Watts**

(386) 467-9800 Extension: 101

Direct: 386-524-4009

**jwatts@welaka-fl.gov**

## Welaka Municipal Services

### **Meghan Allmon - Town Clerk**

Direct Line: (386) 524-4010

Town Hall Extension: 102

**townclerk@welaka-fl.gov**

## Welaka Town Council

### **Council President Jessica Finch**

(386) 467-9800 (Option 7, Option 2)

Town Hall Extension: 200

**jfinch@welaka-fl.gov**

## Welaka Utility Department

### **Kendrea Welch - Utility Clerk**

Direct Line: (386) 524-4016

Town Hall Extension: 103

**utility@welaka-fl.gov**

### **Councilwoman Marianne Milledge**

(386) 467-9800 (Option 7, Option 3)

Town Hall Extension: 201

**mmilledge@welaka-fl.gov**

## Welaka Building Department

### **Justin Morris - Building Inspector**

Direct Line: (386) 524-4013

Town Hall Extension: 105

**building@welaka-fl.gov**

### **Councilwoman Tonya Long**

(386) 467-9800 (Option 7, Option 4)

Town Hall Extension: 202

**tonyalong@welaka-fl.gov**

**Waste Pro:** (386) 328-5445

### **Councilwoman Kathy Washington**

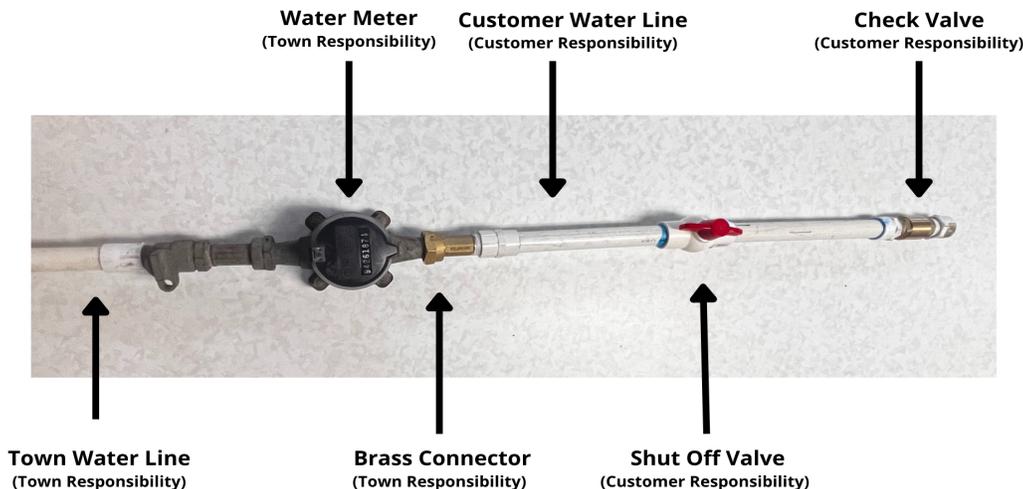
(386) 467-9800 (Option 7, Option 5)

Town Hall Extension: 203

**kwashington@welaka-fl.gov**

## *UTILITY NOTICE*

Recently residents have asked us to clarify what part of the water piping is their responsibility to maintain and repair, and which is the Town of Welaka responsibility. We have made a drawing below showing how a typical water line is plumbed to your home. The arrow indicates which parts are the Town's responsibility and which are the customer's. If you do not have a shut-off valve on your side of the water meter, we suggest you consult a plumber about installing one. This will ensure you have an emergency cut-off should a water leak occur in your home. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to our Water Department at (386) 467-9800.





The Town of Welaka would like to thank our Sponsors for our fireworks show we are having on August 5th. It is only through their generous support that we are able to host Welaka's first official fireworks display!

**Platinum Sponsors**

**\$2,500.00**



**Bronze Sponsors**

**\$500.00**



**Resident Sponsors**

**Kenneth Schillo \$300.00**

If anyone wishes to donate, we will be accepting financial support throughout the entire month of July!

# JULY 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26	27	28	29	30	1	2
3 National Stay-Out-of-the-Sun Day 	4 Independence Day (Town Hall Closed) 	5 Trash & Recycling Pickup National Bikini Day 	6 National Fried Chicken Day 	7 World Chocolate Day 	8 Community Advisory Council Meeting 9:00 AM Welaka Town Hall	9 Community Cleanup Welaka Town Hall 7:00 AM Coffee & Pastries & 8:00 AM Cleanup
10 National Kitten Day 	11 Trash, Recycling & Yard Debris Pickup	12 Welaka Town Council Meeting 6:00 PM Welaka Town Hall	13 Charter Review Committee Meeting 5:00 PM Welaka Town Hall	14 National Mac & Cheese Day 	15 Meter-Reading Day	16 National Cherry Day 
17 National Ice Cream Day 	18 Trash & Recycling Pickup	19	20 National Moon Day 	21 Zoning Board Meeting 6:00 PM Welaka Town Hall	22	23
24	25 Trash, Recycling & Yard Debris Pickup	26 Code Enforcement Board Meeting 6:00 PM Welaka Town Hall	27 Charter Review Committee Meeting 5:00 PM Welaka Town Hall	28	29 National Lipstick Day 	30
31 National Avocado Day 	1	2	3	4	5 Last Food Truck Friday 5:30 - 8:30 PM Jefferson Smith Park Riverfront Fireworks 9:00 PM	6